



Community Appearance Commission

Minutes March 5, 2008

The regular meeting of the Salisbury Community Appearance Commission was called to order Wednesday, March 5, 2008, at 4 p.m. by Barbara Perry, Chair, in the Council Chamber located at 217 South Main Street, Salisbury, North Carolina. The following members were present and absent:

Present: Greta Connor, Diane Gibbs, Barbara Perry, Sara Robinson, Bill Safrit, Johnny Safrit, and Tom Wolpert

Absent: Suzanne Casey, Suzette Davis, Barbara Lawther, Chad Morgan

Staff: Councilman Mark Lewis, Diana Moghrabi and Lynn Raker

The minutes of the February 6, 2008, meeting were approved with one minor correction. The financial report was received. There was a small reception and refreshment in honor of Johnny Safrit, who will be leaving the CAC. Johnny Safrit has served a contiguous six years and a total of 12 years on the CAC; he will be missed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Neighborhoods & Education Committee

- Greta Connor stated that the Neighborhoods & Education committee did not meet last month. They will meet March 27 at 3 o'clock in the first floor conference room at City Hall. The Neighborhood Leadership Alliance will meet April 24, at 4 p.m., at One Water Street. A "Spruce Up" flyer will be included with an invitation to the NLA meeting.
- Greta Connor contacted Eldridge Williams about the Livingstone students' cleanup on Institute Street. They have resumed their efforts and have picked up trash along Institute Street prior to the CAC/Tree Board Award Luncheon.
- Clyde Overcash told Greta that he would like to see the Spring Spruce-up on a consistent date every year. Although that is a good idea, this clean-up effort is in addition to the Street Division's (Public Services) regular duties and has to be done when the department can work it in. The Spring Spruce-Up will be from April 14-18, 2008.

- Lynn Raker distributed an article in the *Salisbury Post* regarding the Council Retreat and City Council's commitment to better housing. City Council received a report from the City Staff Better Housing Committee. Council received the report very positively and felt the housing situation should be addressed this year. Mark Lewis said the Mayor and Councilman Bill Burgin discussed it at length.

A lot of work will need to be done by staff which is already pretty stretched. The general consensus was to bring all of the enforcement under one roof instead of through the various departments. City Council approves adding an additional code enforcement person. The structure needs to be put in place, and at budget time, the positions will need to be funded.

The Commercial Maintenance Code is also a high priority for City Council.

- The collapsed property on Long Street has not been cleared, even though staff had been told that it would be cleaned up by February 18. (A note from Jeff Benfield on 3/13/08 stated that the work was completed.)
- Mark Lewis requested a top ten list of the worst houses in the city. "We would manage that list and report on it at every meeting." He suggested generating the list and getting on the City Council Agenda. Mark Lewis said he was not afraid to put someone's house on Access 16. He would request a quarterly report from the City Manager on the status of the list.

Greta Connor recommended that each neighborhood submit a house as a starting point. She has particular concerns about the Long Street corridor. Lynn Raker agreed that we need to clean up our major corridors, but we would need to be objective. Lynn has wanted to get incentive grants for our corridors to initiate renovation and rehabilitation activity.

Mark Lewis said, "If we want to get aggressive in this area, we are going to have to rewrite our ordinances and tighten them down. That way, if we end up going to court, we could win."

Art in Public Places

- The Michael Baker sculpture has been installed at the Fisher and Lee Street Plaza.
- The Public Art Committee is discussing sculpture in the downtown area.
- The wall at the Thread Shed would be a great place for art. It is on Lynn Raker's radar to see follow through.

Landscaping

- The Landscape of the Month sign still needs to be picked up at the home of Clay Smith. Johnny Safrit will follow up.
- Bring Landscape of the Month nominations for April to the next meeting. (Note addresses, please.)

Grants

Lynn Raker distributed spreadsheets indicating the status of the Innes Street (IS) Grants and the Municipal Service District (MSD) Grants.

The landscaping project at the Thread Shed is on hold while the city completes work in the alleyway.

Lynn Raker reported that the Davis Law Office will not be doing their project this fiscal year. The money will be offered to other candidates. Aull Printing, OK Wig and Arba Knapp may apply. Cheryl Goins will apply next year. East Square Artworks is interested in placing floral containers outside of their building to soften their facade.

Bill Safrit reported that the MSD Grant spent \$25,341. The City Council helped by authorizing additional funds. There is a balance of \$2,567 in the IS Grants.

There will be a meeting about the grant guidelines April 3 at noon in the first floor conference room. Diane Gibbs, Bill Safrit, Johnny Safrit, Barbara Perry and Barbara Lawther will serve on the review committee.

Awards

The Awards Luncheon was held February 27, 2008, in the Hillard Room at Livingstone College. Greta Connor said she thought it was the best the CAC has ever had. Staff thought that Livingstone College did a wonderful job setting up the tables and AV equipment. Jim Dunn made a wonderful presentation that was quite witty. The Mayor and many guests thought it was a lovely affair.

Barbara Perry had received comments from attendees about how much those in attendance had learned; it is a compliment, since it is part of the duty of the CAC and Tree Board to educate and to share with the citizens of Salisbury. Barbara Perry won the Jim Dunn award and was both honored and surprised.

Barbara Perry requested a budget recap of the awards luncheon at the next meeting. There was considerable savings on the awards, which came to \$1,300 for all of the awards. The food was \$15 per person.

NEW BUSINESS

CAC Membership

Chad Morgan will not seek another year on the CAC since his job prevents him from attending the meetings. The names of Connie Baker and Sean Myers have been submitted in the past as potential CAC members. Michele d'Hemecourt was also recommended. Jane Riley was recommended at the February meeting; she has applied for the Hurley Park Board.

All the appointments at the City Council meeting were reappointments – so, there was no action on the third seat for the Hurley Park Board. City Council reappointed Barbara Lawther and Sara Robinson to the CAC. No action was taken on new appointments (with the exception of Maggie Blackwell on Planning Board).

OTHER BUSINESS

- Lynn Raker spoke to City Council about the East Innes Street/I-85 exchange project to let them know it has been postponed again due to the statewide drought conditions—even though we have plenty of water in the ground and we have the capacity to take care of the project. NCDOT cannot look at Salisbury's specific situation apart from the rest of the state. If the climate improves, we may be looking at a fall installation. The city is going to go ahead and get the medians planted.
- Tom Wolpert expressed his concerns about the curbing and sidewalk around the First Baptist Church. People are parking and driving on and over sidewalks crushing them (sidewalks and curbing). Lynn Raker will take a look at it.
- Mark Lewis reported that a block-by-block cost estimate for downtown streetscape was requested by City Council. (Two blocks of Main and Innes Streets in each direction from the square are presently mismatched from different eras.) City Council is working on bonds for parking lots. The Empire Hotel block will not be done until "we know what is going to happen." Can we as a city afford this?

The parking lot behind Bernhardt's Hardware has been a CAC priority site for improvement for many years since it is in an important corridor to Downtown Salisbury.

- The CAC thanked Mark Lewis for his active interest and participation in matters concerning community appearance.

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m. with Johnny Safrit striking the gavel. The next regular CAC meeting will be April 2, 2008.